

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and reconsideration of the subject application are respectfully requested in light of the amendments above and the comments which follow.

Claims 1 and 3-27 were pending in this application. In this response, claims 1, 9-11 and 21-22 have been amended and claims 5-8 canceled. Thus, claims 1, 3-4, and 9-27 remain pending.

Support for the foregoing amendments can be found, for example, in at least the following locations in the original disclosure: the original claims.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, because the Amendment places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; does not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration; does not present any additional claims; and places the application in better form for an appeal should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment, reexamination and further and favorable reconsideration of the subject application in light of the following remarks, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, are thus respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 7, 9, 11 and 21-27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By the present response, Applicants have presented allowable claims 7, 9 and 11 in independent form and have presented all remaining pending

claims as depending from one of such allowable independent claims. Accordingly, all pending claims, i.e., 1, 3-4, and 9-27, are presently allowable.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 10 and 12-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,435,780 to Flynn (hereafter “*Flynn*”) on the grounds set forth beginning at page 2 of the Official Action. This rejection has been obviated by the amendment to claims presented herein, by which all pending claims, i.e., 1, 3-4, and 9-27, are presently allowable.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner feel that any issues remain, it is requested that the undersigned be contacted so that any such issues may be adequately addressed and prosecution of the instant application expedited.

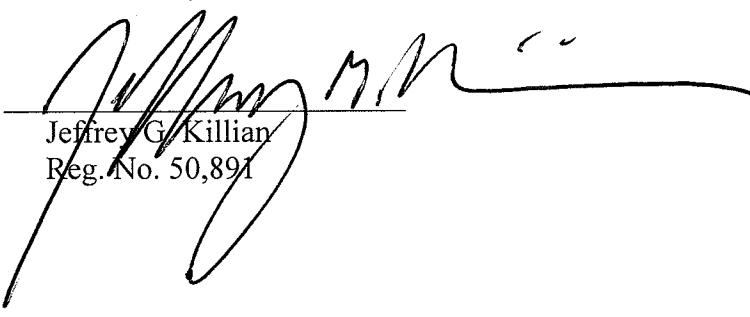
Respectfully submitted,

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